



2007

Idaho Forest Practices Year-End Report



Developed and Submitted by

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2007 Forest Practices Year-End Report

Introduction

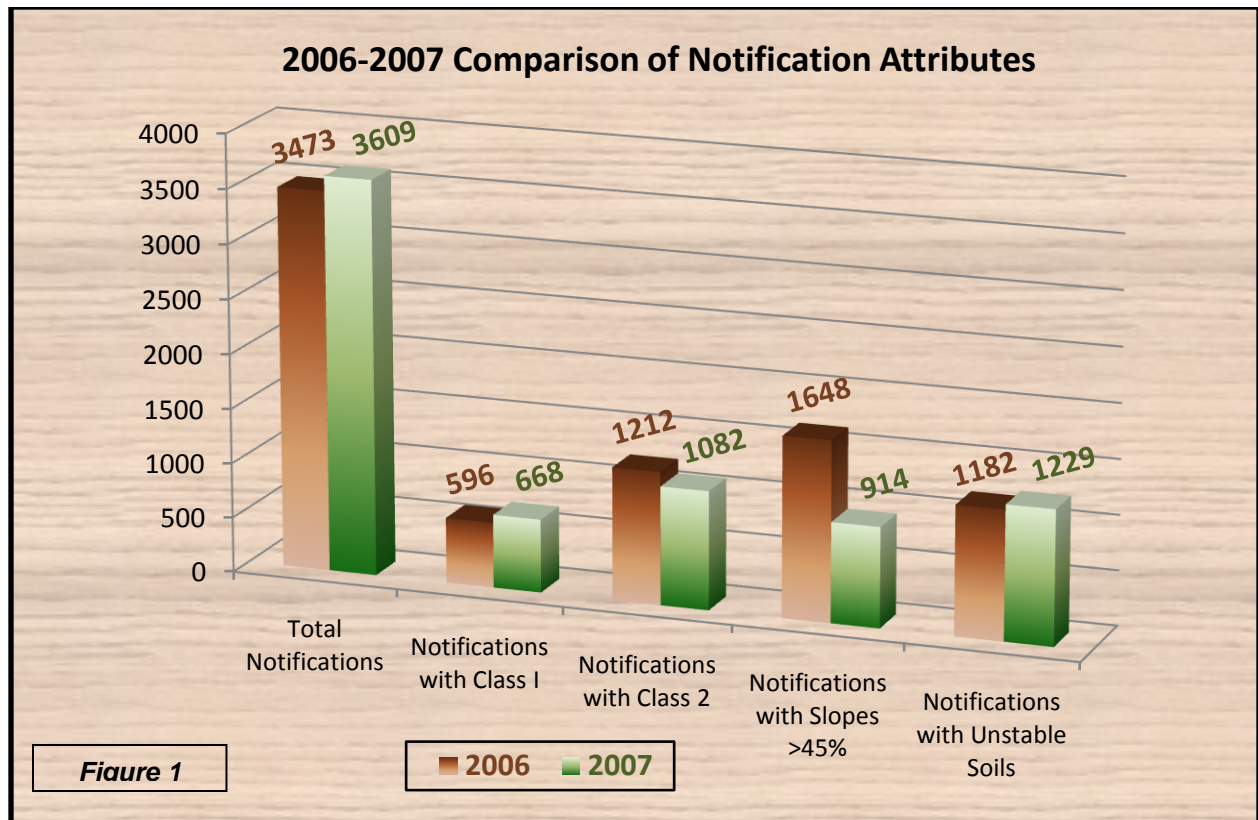
The Idaho Forest Practices Act (FPA), passed by the Legislature in 1974, recognizes the importance of Idaho's forestlands in providing ecological, social and economic benefits to the people of Idaho. The FPA and the associated administrative rules, the Forest Practices Rules (FPR), were developed and modified to maintain and protect vital forest resources while encouraging active management to help enhance the ecological and social benefits derived from Idaho forestlands. Protecting water quality, wildlife habitat and forest tree health are just a few of the objectives that the FPA and FPR strive to achieve, as well as providing sustainable tree growth to ensure the continuation of associated jobs and wood products that all people enjoy from vigorously growing forests.

Each January, the Forest Practices Program, administered by the Idaho Department of Lands (IDL), collects and compiles data from the previous calendar year to provide land managers, forestry professionals and other interested parties an overall "picture" of the forest practices that have occurred. The purpose of this report is to communicate forest practices information, for the state of Idaho, for 2007. Each graph contained in this report exhibits comparisons of 2007 activities with 2006 (and in some cases, other past years). This information is gathered from data collected from each IDL Area Office, where the Forest Practices information is kept and administered by the Private Forestry Specialists.

Forest Practices Notifications

Before commencing with any forest practice on private timberlands, an Operator (responsible for the forest-practice implementation and compliance with FPR) must file a Forest Practices Notification form, which also serves as the slash hazard agreement contract. On this notification, the Operator must indicate whether or not the site of the operation has a Class I stream, Class II stream, steep slopes and/or unstable soils. In 2007, there were 3,609 total Forest Practices Notifications filed with IDL. *Figure 1* shows a comparison, between 2007 and 2006, of the total number of notifications, and the breakdown of notifications which indicated the presence of each of these site attributes.

In 2007, the total number of notifications filed with IDL in 2007 rose 3.9 percent from 2006. Of the total number of operations in which a notification was filed (3,609), 18.5 percent (668) of them contained a Class I stream (fish-bearing or domestic-water supplying). This reflects an increase in the percentage of operations containing a Class I stream; in 2006, only 17.2 percent of the total operations (with a notification on file) contained a Class I stream. There was a marked decrease in operations conducted on slopes greater than 45 percent, reflecting operators' general increased respect of not disturbing steep, unstable sites.



Forest Practices Inspection Reports

Once the Forest Practices Notification is on file in the local IDL Area Office, the Private Forestry Specialist begins the process of scheduling on-site inspections, striving to inspect at least 50% of all of the forest-practice operations that have a notification on file. Inspections may be performed multiple times on the same operation, depending on the observed site conditions and/or upon request of the operator or forest manager in charge of the logging operation.

Figure 2 shows a 2006-2007 comparison of the number of inspections performed (*Inspection Reports*) in relation to the total number of Forest Practices Notifications submitted (*Notifications*). Since the total number of inspection reports includes repeat and follow-up inspections on the same operation, the next histogram exhibit (*Forest Practices*) shows the total number of distinct operations (forest practices) that were inspected. In 2007, 1946 different forest practices were inspected out of a total of 3,609 notifications, showing that 54% of all of the notifications submitted were inspected at least once. In fact, many operations were inspected multiple times; there were 1946 different operations inspected, however, the total number of onsite inspections totaled 2532, showing that 586 inspections were repeat inspections on operations throughout the state. The final histogram exhibit in *Figure 2* shows the number of inspections done on operations being performed in an area containing a Class I stream.

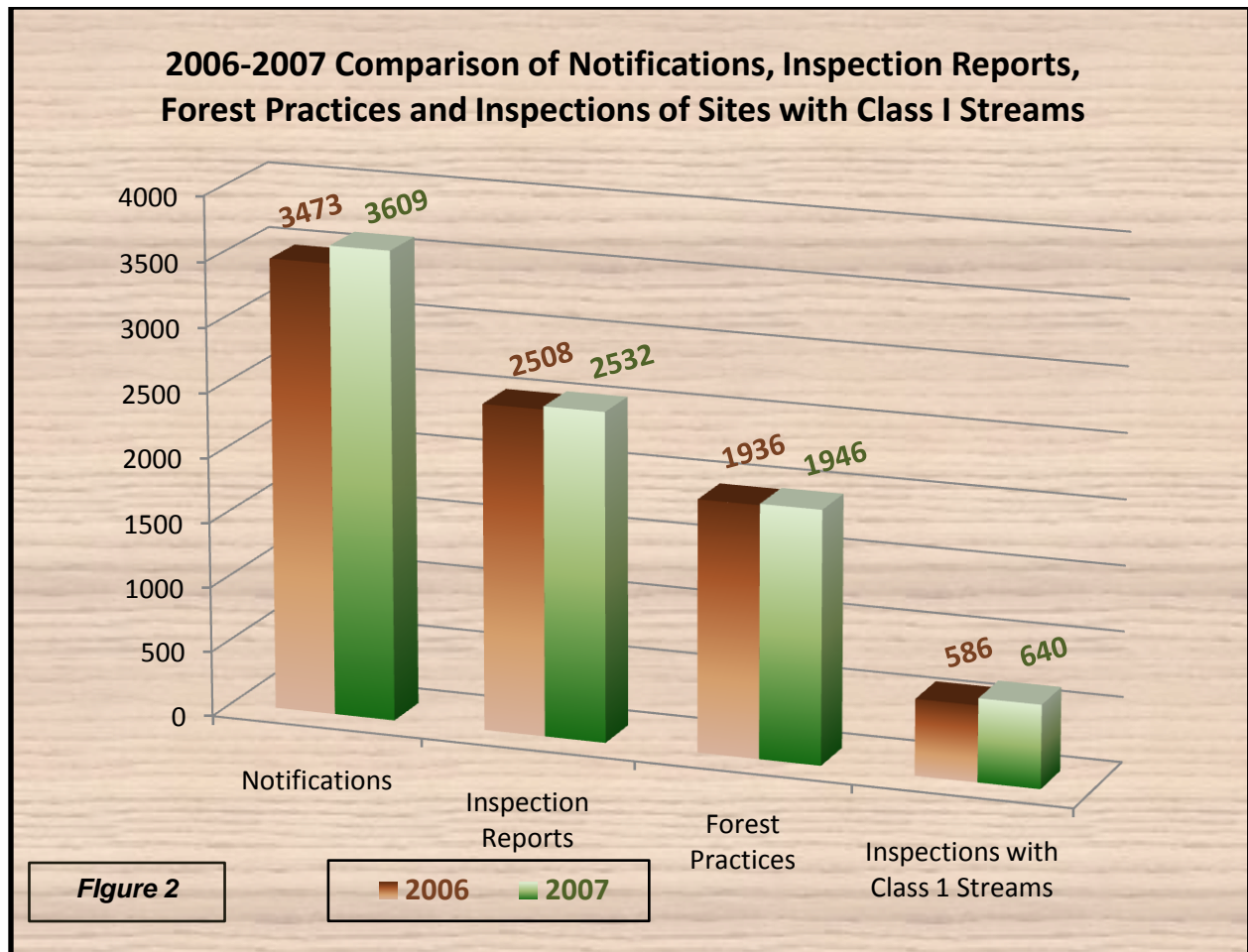
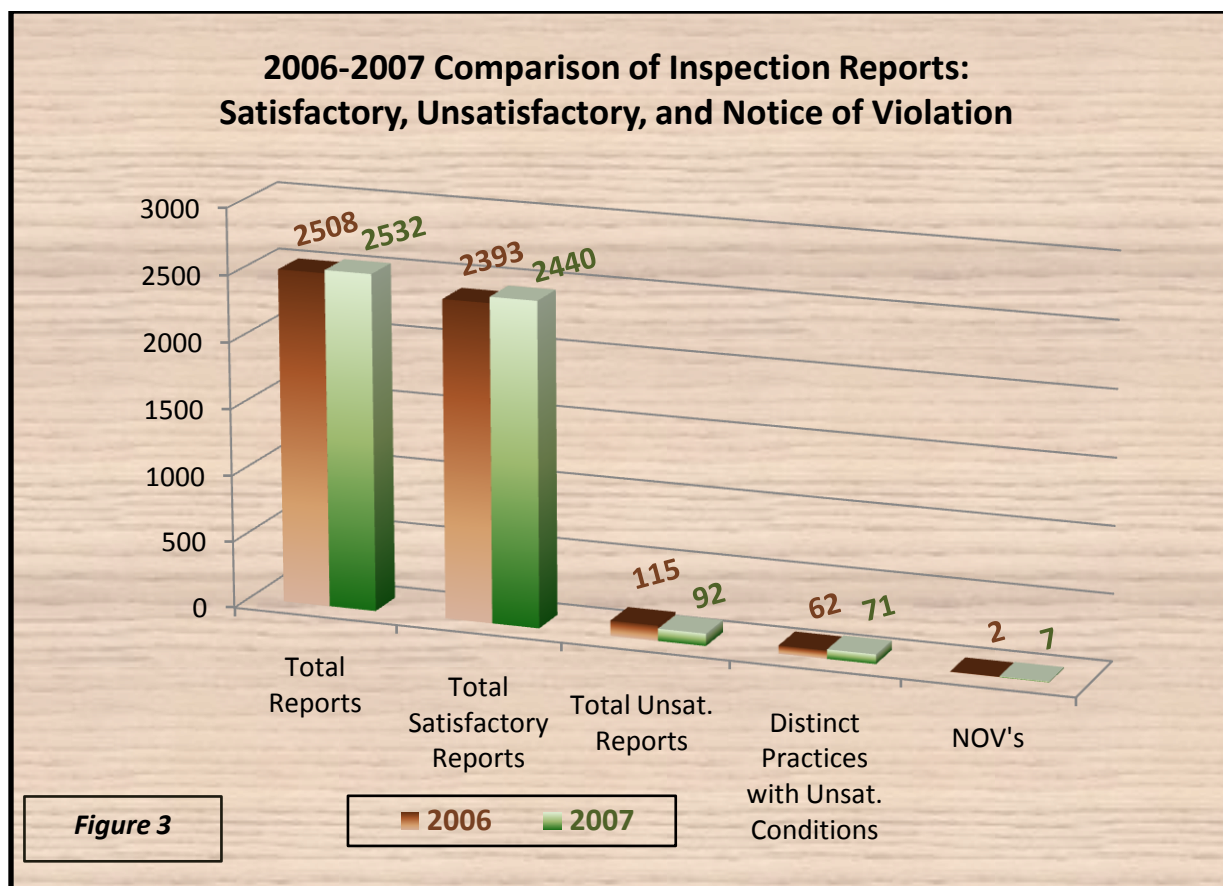


Figure 3 shows that, within these performed inspections, the total number of resulting inspection reports that contained all-satisfactory conditions was 2440 (*Total Satisfactory Reports*), showing that over 96% of the inspections performed were in total compliance with the FPR (or had been brought into full compliance through remediation). The total number of inspections that resulted in reports indicating at least one unsatisfactory condition (minor infraction of the FPR) totaled 92, under 4% of the total inspections performed. When looking at distinct operations that were inspected (total inspection report numbers include repeat, or multiple, inspections), only 71 operations received inspections that resulted in the observance of unsatisfactory conditions (*Distinct Practices with Unsat. Conditions*). A Notice of Violation (NOV) is issued when an inspection results in observances of repeated unsatisfactory conditions or severe resource degradation. In 2007, seven NOV's were issued to operators throughout the state, increasing from two issued in 2006.



The total number of unsatisfactory inspection reports in 2007 totaled 92, down from 115 total inspection reports in 2006. *Figure 4* shows the frequency and types of individual rules that were violated in these reports. (To see the individual administrative rules listed, visit this site to view the Forest Practices Rules: <http://adm.idaho.gov/adminrules/rules/idapa20/0201.pdf>) By far, the most unsatisfactory conditions were observed in operations violating stream-protection rules (Administrative Rule *030.07*). The number of stream-protection rules violated (for the first time or to a minor extent) rose from 15 in 2006 to 45 in 2007. This is due, for the most part, to the addition of nine new administrative rules, within this *030.07* section, in 2006. As education and awareness is further spread to operators and landowners, this number is expected to reduce significantly over the next year. The most frequent rule infraction seen in 2006 (*040.04*, road maintenance rules) reduced significantly in 2007, reducing from 33 to 20 unsatisfactory conditions on sites having road-surface quality issues and water drainage problems. The 100% jump of unsatisfactory conditions observed under rule *030.04* (locations of landings and skid trails) seems to indicate an increased problem with operators creating skid trails within the Stream Protection Zone (SPZ) or using existing skid trails without the required variance.

2006-2007 Individual Rules Violated in Unsatisfactory Reports

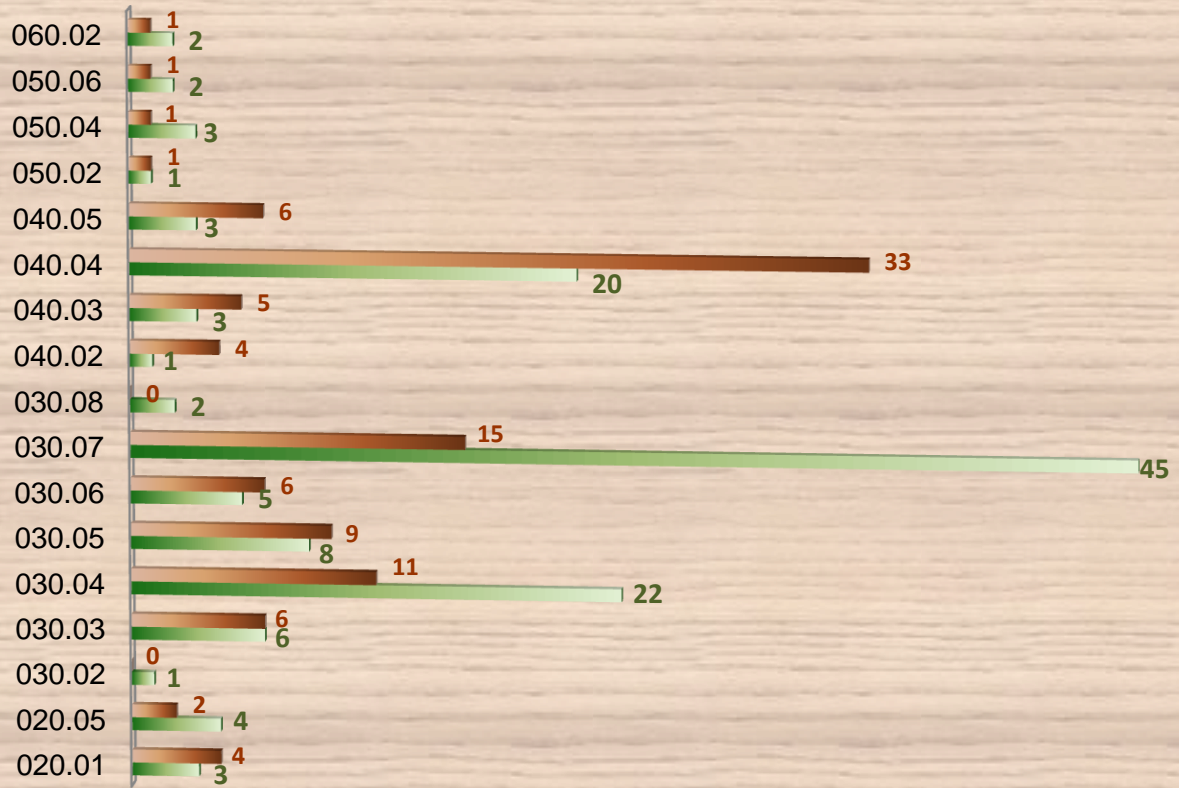
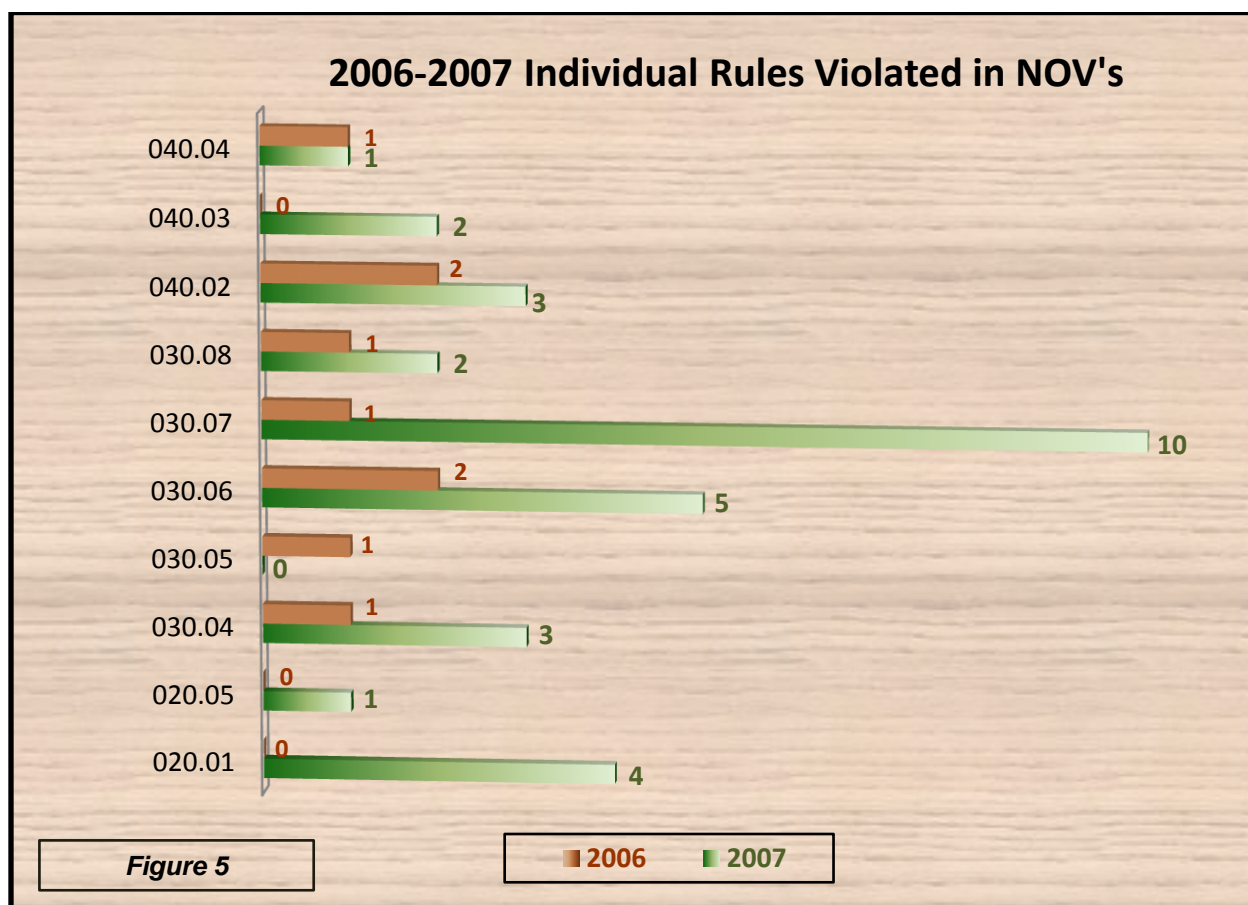


Figure 4

■ 2006 ■ 2007

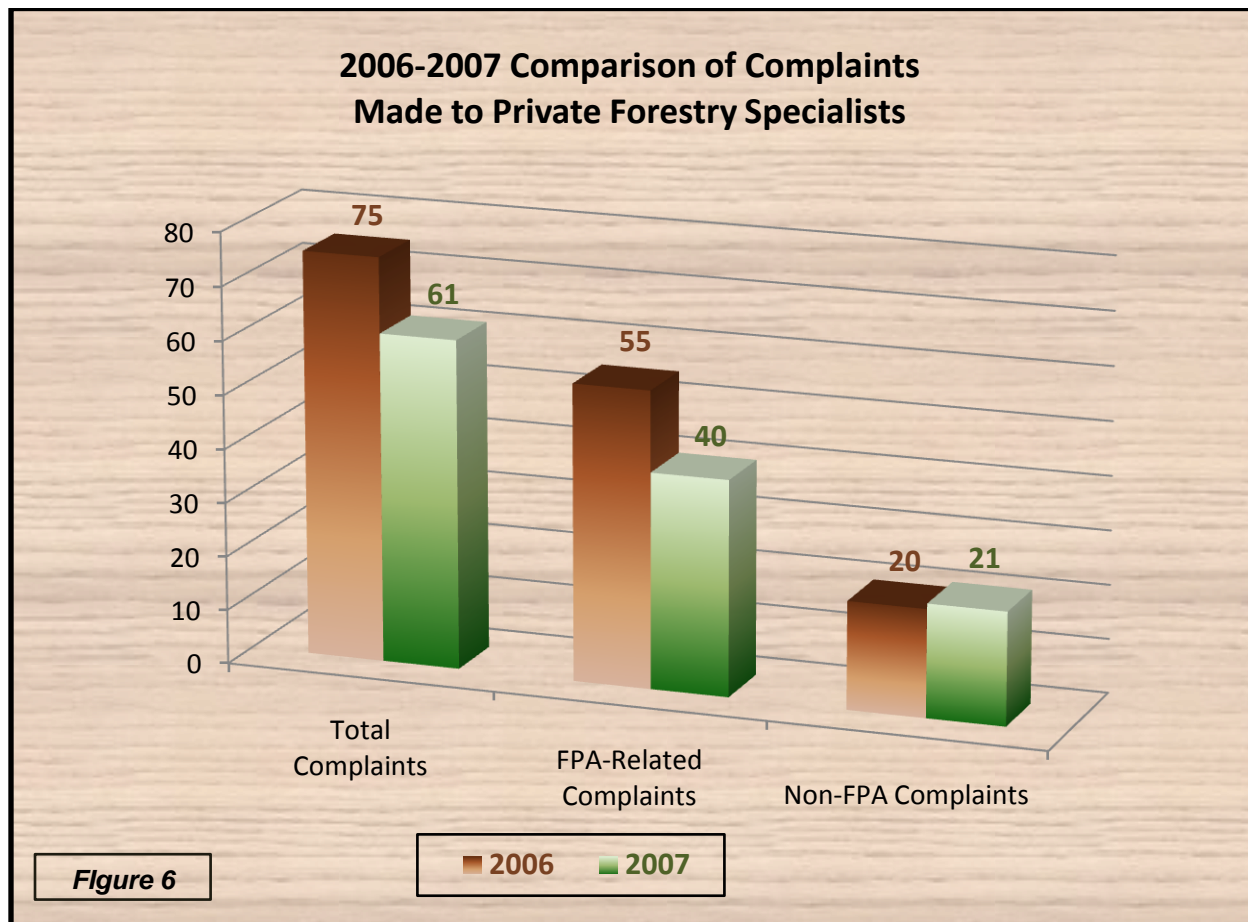
Figure 5 shows the specific administrative rules violated within the issued Notices of Violation in 2006 and 2007 (one issued NOV may contain more than one violated rule). Like the 2006-2007 comparison of issued unsatisfactory conditions, 2007 showed a sharp increase in violations of the stream-protection rules within issued NOV's. These NOV's were issued on sites in which the operation had caused serious resource degradation.



Complaints Made to IDL

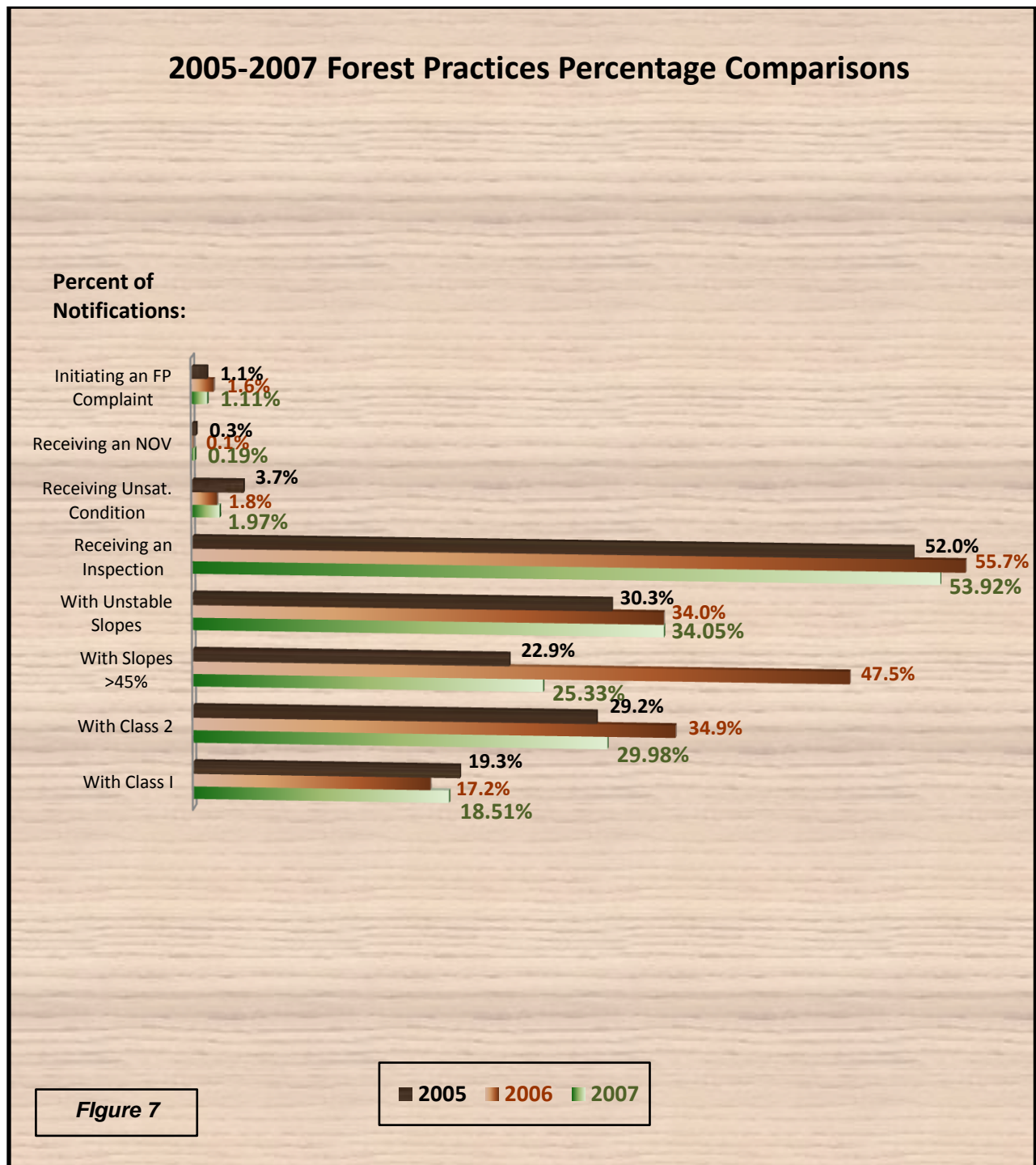
While operations are commencing on private lands, other neighboring landowners, individuals from nearby communities or interested organizations sometimes voice concerns or complaints to personnel at the local IDL Area Office. These complaints are fielded and addressed by IDL Private Forestry Specialists. Complaints range from perceptions of degradation, water-quality effects and overstory removal, to concerns over aesthetics. The Private Forestry Specialists analyze each complaint, deciding whether or not the complaint can be addressed by compliance with the Forest Practices Rules (e.g., aesthetic qualities are not an element regulated by the Forest Practices Rules), and if so, a site visit is performed to check an operator's compliance

with the rules. *Figure 6* shows the total numbers of complaints submitted to the IDL Area Offices, statewide. In 2007, of the 61 total complaints fielded by the Private Forestry Specialists, 40 of them were actually addressed by checking compliance with the Forest Practices Rules.



Summary—Percentage Comparison

In looking at comparisons over two years of time, *Figure 7* shows the site or operation attributes as a percentage of the total notifications filed in each year (2005, 2006 and 2007).



Variances

Variances are granted by IDL when an Operator shows justification that acting under a modification of a Forest Practices rule is necessary to complete a needed forest practice, and will result in no degradation to the site resources. A variance may also be granted when, in the course of carrying out a forest practice, it is shown that an activity done in non-compliance with a rule will result in less damage than operating within full compliance with the rules. Each variance request is carefully analyzed by an IDL Private Forestry Specialist, and a determination is made on the granting of each variance. *Figure 8* shows a 2006-2007 comparison of the number of variances requested, the number of variances granted, and the number of requested variances that were denied.

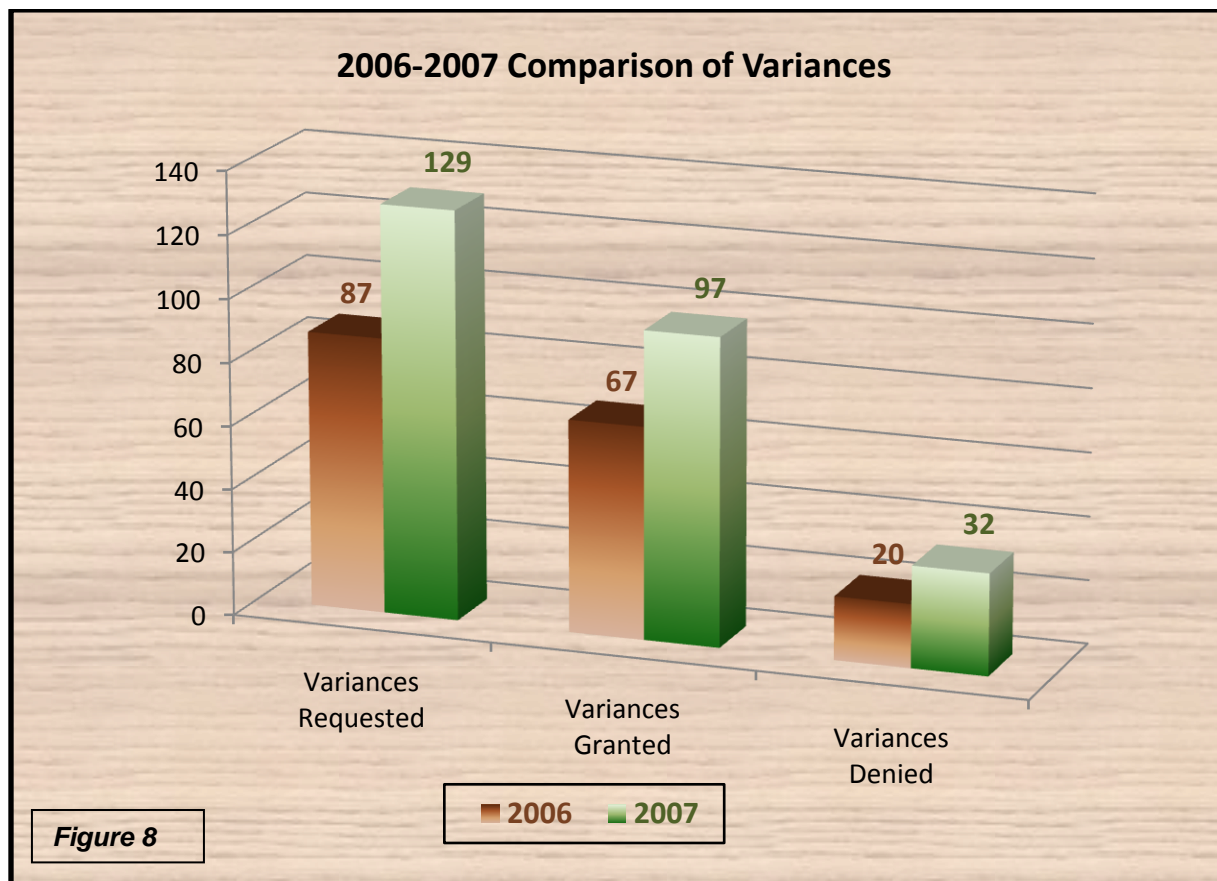
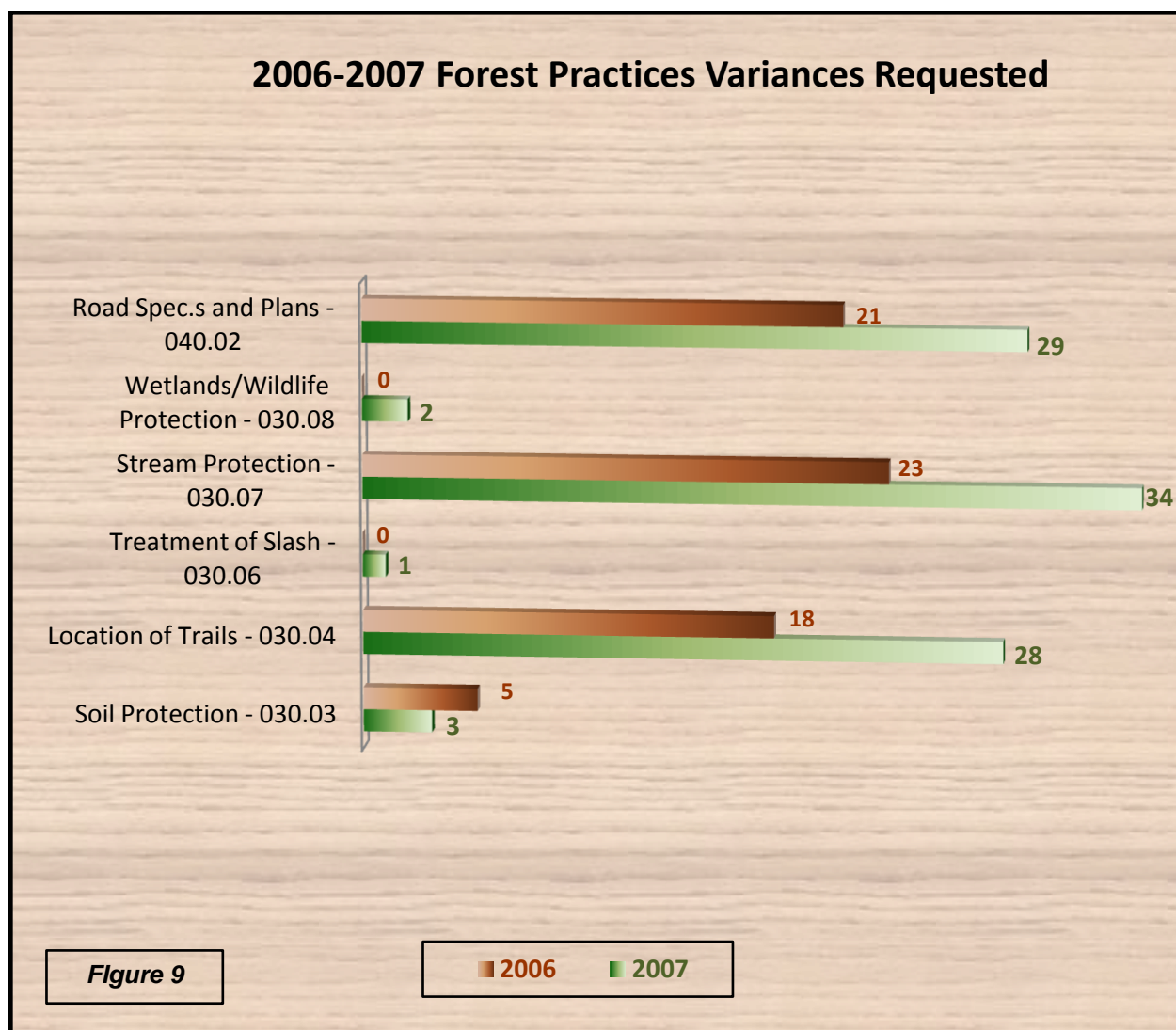


Figure 9 exhibits the types of rules from which variances are requested. Most of these highly requested variances deal with the desire to use existing trails or roads within an SPZ. With the addition of the new stream-protection rules added in 2006, both the amount of requested variances, as well as the amount of denied variances increased. Variances of this nature were only granted if proof was demonstrated to IDL that use of existing roads or skid trails (within an SPZ) would result in very little or no degradation to the soils, water quality and fish habitat within the watershed, and that the use of these trails/roads would result in significantly less sediment delivery than constructing new trail (or road) systems outside of the SPZ.



Stream Channel Alteration Projects Administered by IDL

In accordance with an MOU between the Idaho Department of Lands and the Idaho Department of Water Resources, IDL Private Forestry Specialists are granted the authority to oversee and administer culvert, bridge and ford installations and removals on private lands, granted that the stream-channel alteration projects meet certain size limitations and installation criteria. *Figure 10* shows a 2006-2007 comparison of IDL-administered installations completed on private lands, sorted by IDL Area.

